

VZCZCXRO4959
PP RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHSB #0034/01 0171340
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 171340Z JAN 08
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2392
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 1816
RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 1721
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 1847
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1124
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 1481
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1903
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 4331
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0974
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC//DHO-7//
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK//DOOC/ECMO/CC/DAO/DOB/DOI//
RUEPGBA/CDR USEUCOM INTEL VAIHINGEN GE//ECJ23-CH/ECJ5M//

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000034

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

AF/S FOR S. HILL
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR B. PITTMAN
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR L.DOBBS AND E.LOKEN
TREASURY FOR J. RALYEA AND T.RAND
COMMERCE FOR BECKY ERKUL
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ABUD](#) [AMGT](#) [BEXP](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: HARARE 2008 BFIF PROJECT PROPOSAL

REF: A. 07 STATE 159597
[1](#)B. 07 HARARE 1002

[1](#)1. (U) Embassy Harare proposes to draw on the Business Facilitation and Incentive Fund (BFIF) to support a sequel to successful previous BFIF-funded "Just Business" fora (Refs A and B).

"Just Business" Forum Sequel

[1](#)2. (SBU) Post proposes providing financial support to the American Business Association of Zimbabwe (ABAZ) to hold a sequel to the BFIF-supported "Just Business" fora that the Association held in 2006 and 2007. Building on the momentum of the past two years' successful and provocative events, ABAZ has begun planning of the sequel to take place in August or September 2008, and has requested Embassy financial support. The event will further establish "Just Business" as Harare's pre-eminent private sector-led public address on economic reform. Post regards the role that the business community can play as critical in the endeavor to turn around the Zimbabwean economy and tip Zimbabwe in the right political direction and thus wishes to support the event. In addition, the forum has become a sterling networking and trade promotion opportunity for Zimbabwe's beleaguered business community.

[1](#)3. (SBU) As in 2006 and 2007, the forum is intended to serve as a vehicle for putting reformist ideas in the public sphere, emboldening public discussion, and underlining Zimbabwe's need to start planning for the post-Mugabe era. Under the theme "Just Business," the day-long event will

bring together international business leaders and analysts to identify and deliberate over the key measures needed to right Zimbabwe's course. Learning from past years' experience, ABAZ intends to draw primarily on prominent indigenous African economic analysts and business people, as they have been the most effective speakers in drawing parallels between their own countries' reform experiences and the challenges that Zimbabwe faces. To build on the successful "Just Business" theme, ABAZ envisions intensified outreach to moderate-minded government officials to secure their participation this year.

14. (SBU) Laying the groundwork for more public outreach, ABAZ took the key steps this year of introducing membership dues and hiring a management company to run a permanent secretariat in 2007. As an indication of its increased

SIPDIS

maturity, the Association recently presented to Ambassador a proposed work plan for 2008 that includes greater outreach and improved communications with members of government, as well as a membership drive, website development, and organization of the "Just Business" forum.

15. (SBU) As the economy deteriorates further, the estimated cost for the forum is somewhat higher than in 2007 due to the need to import more goods and services or pay for them locally in foreign exchange. In addition, British Airways is unlikely to provide complimentary airfare to speakers, as it did in the past two years, having withdrawn from the Zimbabwe market in October 2007. The foreign exchange component of the cost estimate is US\$15,000 and includes: the venue and refreshments for the day (\$3500), transportation and per diem for outside speakers (\$4000), pre-event publicity and

HARARE 00000034 002 OF 002

communications (\$4000) and follow-on media coverage and publications (\$3500). While Post once again anticipates strong private sector financial support by ABAZ-member companies, an event of this caliber cannot take place without the hard currency support that BFIF provides.

16. (U) Post point of contact is econoff Frances Chisholm, 263-4-250-595, ext. 206, chisholmf@state.gov.
MCGEE